



# Neighborhood Action Planning Handbook



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## Acknowledgments

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For information on Neighborhoods contact:

R.J. Blair, Neighborhood Coordinator  
City Manager's Office, City of Arlington  
Mail Stop 01-0300  
P.O. Box 90231  
Arlington, TX 76004-3231

817-459-6104  
blairr@ci.arlington.tx.us

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## Table of Contents

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	Acknowledgments	page 2
	Table of Contents	page 3
I	Introduction	Page 5
II	Why Plan?	page 7
III	Getting Started	page 9
	Organization	9
	Commitment	9
	Operating Procedure	9
	Ground Rules	10
	Participation	10
	Roles	11
IV	Plan Development	page 13
	Step 1: Determine your boundaries	15
	Step 2: Assess your neighborhood	17
	Step 3: Identify Issues	18
	Step 4: Develop goals and objectives	20
	Step 5: Collect data	21
	Step 6: Identify neighborhood resources and assests	22
	Step 7: Develop and prioritize actions	23
	Step 8: Assemble your action plan	25
V	Implementation	page 27
	Plan for Action	27
	Monitor	27
	Evaluate	27
	Publicize	27
	Update	27
	Appendices	
	Appendix A	
	Neighborhood Network	page 29
	Appendix B	
	Consensus Building	page 31

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## Introduction

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The Neighborhood Action Planning Handbook is a compliment to the *Neighborhood Organizational Handbook*, first published in May 1998, as a guide on how to organize and maintain a neighborhood organization.

Another handbook, *Community Connections*, produced by the City of Arlington Public Information Office, provides information to organizations and individuals on the variety of resources available in our community to address neighborhood issues.

The Neighborhood Action Planning Handbook is divided into five sections. The first is this Introduction section followed by, *Why Plan?*, which defines a neighborhood plan and explains its importance. The third section, *Getting Started*, explains what an organization needs to begin planning. The fourth section, *Plan Development*, gives a step-by-step description of the planning process. The fifth section, *Implementation*, offers ways to keep your plan current and to ensure that it's implemented.

This Handbook also includes two appendices including information on the Neighborhood Network and a description of consensus building.



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## Why Plan?

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Neighborhood Action Planning is an opportunity for citizens to shape the future of their neighborhood and their overall quality of life. The whole philosophy of a neighborhood action plan is that the residents, business owners and other community partners in the neighborhood are the experts on their neighborhood. They know their neighborhood better than anyone else. Creating a neighborhood team is an important first step toward developing your plan. This team can consist of residents, business owners, property owners, tenants, community institutions, schools, faith-based organizations, and non-profit organizations – all the possible stakeholders who have an interest in the welfare of your neighborhood area. Neighborhood action planning can strengthen your community through increased interaction. The process of developing a plan will likely build a strong sense of community. This will in turn lead to increased pride in the neighborhood, cooperation between neighbors and a feeling of empowerment for neighborhood residents.

By creating a forum and process for citizen involvement in addressing the neighborhood's issues, a neighborhood action plan can support creative problem solving and a spirit of teamwork between the City and the neighborhood. An action plan is a tool that can focus and bring direction to a neighborhood organization. It is possible to think of the plan as a map that will guide decisions to shape your neighborhood's future.

Neighborhood Action Plans can improve the City's coordination of services to a neighborhood by bringing attention, focus and problem-solving resources to that area. It can improve input and coordination regarding all community wide issues. Although plans can improve the communication and decision making for future recommendations, no neighborhood plan can pre-empt property or zoning rights as established by state law.

An action plan typically looks at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, needs and concerns of a neighborhood. From those issues identified in the process, a plan will establish goals for improving your neighborhood along with recommendations and specific actions for how to reach these goals. A plan is a guide to keeping your organization focused. Neighborhood action plans provide a system for using your resources effectively and leveraging other resources needed for your community.

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## Why Plan?

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To illustrate the value of developing an action plan, let's take one issue — a neighborhood park that has been neglected and has deteriorated with litter and in need of minor repairs. Through goal setting and action steps development, the neighborhood organization may decide to have quarterly clean-ups and repair days. With proper planning, work can be scheduled, volunteers recruited, tools and materials acquired through donations, and necessary arrangements made throughout the year for regular cleanups. Park activity dates can be scheduled and made available to everyone in the organization. Without collaborative planning, the park could deteriorate even further and become a dumping ground and an eyesore.

Implementation of your Neighborhood Action Plan will be primarily the responsibility of the neighborhood residents, working with appropriate departments of the City of Arlington and other community partners. The implementation of your neighborhood action plan can span from one year to three years and beyond. It depends upon the amount of energy and participation of the residents and businesses in the area and their dedication to continued progress. Above all a neighborhood action plan is a ***plan for action***.

**“ There are three kinds of groups: those which make things happen; those which wait for things to happen; and those which wonder what happened.”**

**Organization** Your organization, whether homeowner association or neighborhood association, can be formal, with by-laws and regularly scheduled meetings, or informal, with neighbors coming together as needed to address a specific improvement or problem. In either case, the organization provides the foundation for the plan and the resources for carrying it out. With a formal organization, a regular meeting place and committee structure should already be in place. The neighborhood action planning process could take place during your organization's regularly scheduled meetings or you can hold special meetings to develop the plan. The initial plan will take several meetings to develop. In subsequent years, you would probably need only one or two meetings a year to review and update the plan unless there are major changes to be made.

If your neighborhood has an informal organization now, you may want to consider adopting a formal structure. This will provide stability, and your organization will be more likely to stay together throughout the implementation of the plan. (The *Neighborhood Organization Handbook* provides a step-by-step guide to develop and maintain a neighborhood organization.)

Neighborhood Organizations in the City of Arlington are encouraged to register with the Neighborhood Network maintained by the City Manager's Office. Registered groups will receive information regarding city activities in their area. Appendix A contains the form to register your organization with the City of Arlington Neighborhood Network.

**Commitment** Commitment from your organization's members is critical in developing the plan as well as seeing it through. This commitment needs to be shared by the entire organization and not just one or two people. Your members will need to commit to spending time talking to each other about the neighborhood's strengths, opportunities and threats and weaknesses, researching strategies to address issues, and carrying out selected action. The Neighborhood Action Planning process is heavily dependant on a high level of participation on the part of the residents and businesses of the neighborhood

**Operating Procedure** An organization needs to agree on how it will operate during the planning process. Decision-making is critical to the process and needs to be discussed. You may want to consider using consensus building for most of your decisions. A consensus is an agreement reached by the group as a whole, even if it is not everyone's first choice. Consensus building allows everyone to feel a connection and ownership to an idea. Compromises or changes are made until everyone can support the idea. Voting is useful, however, in selecting the importance or priority of your issues and the sequence of the actions to implement when you want a first, second, third, and so on. For example, your group may need to vote on priorities. Hints on how to have successful consensus building are presented in Appendix B.

### **Ground Rules**

Ground rules help the participation process run smoothly. These are rules of conduct that can be forgotten in the heat of a discussion. Everyone needs to agree to the ground rules and agree to abide by them. You may want to post the ground rules at each meeting so they are visible during the discussions. Ground rules help create a setting where everyone feels comfortable speaking. Each organization should develop their own ground rules. The examples listed below can provide a starting point.

*Examples of ground rules are:*

- One person speaks at a time
- Everyone's ideas are valid
- Everyone gets a chance to speak
- Be courteous
- Keep your comments brief and to the point
- Participate in discussions

### **Participation**

Involve as many people in the process as possible. If someone participates in the development of the plan, he/she is more likely to support and participate in the implementation. The core group may be the active members of your organization but other people in and around your neighborhood can provide a wealth of information and possibly new ideas. Make a concerted effort to involve everyone who lives and does business in the neighborhood. Work to ensure that you have broad geographical representation and not limited to one area in the neighborhood.

Try to invite everyone to be involved from the beginning so you have the main participants throughout the process. New people should be welcomed along the way, but may require background information to get up to speed with the rest of the group. For this reason, your organization may want to decide how to handle newcomers at the beginning of the process. You may want to set aside a few minutes prior to the meeting for someone to explain where you are in the process to any new participants. You may also want to have something in writing briefly explaining the process and tell everyone where you are in the process at the first of each meeting.

You can invite broad participation by newsletter, flyers delivered to every household and business, posters in public places, and by word of mouth. Block captains are a good resource to get the word out to residents on their blocks. You may also want to get neighborhood youth involved in identifying their concerns and developing solutions, especially if your issues involve parks or after-school activities.

**Roles** It may be helpful during your discussions to designate people to fill certain roles. Some roles in a successful group process may be facilitator, recorder, and participant.

- A facilitator is a neutral person who ensures that the group stays on the agenda. The facilitator guides the discussion and keeps discussion focused. A facilitator may need to encourage participation from people who do not talk much. He/She also makes sure that no one monopolizes or dominates the conversation.

- A recorder, or scribe, is also a neutral person who keeps a written record of all essential ideas. By recording the group's discussions, the recorder provides an avenue to review previous discussions and decisions. Once the plan is approved by the organization, you may throw away your discussion records or keep them for future reference.

- The participants are very important in the development of an action. The participants need to share openly as they provide ideas and ultimately develop actions. Participants need to feel that their contributions are important to the development of the plan. If they feel that someone within the organization is directing the out-come, they may not participate in the development of the plan or in the implementation.

It may be hard for a member of the organization to remain neutral in the role of facilitator and/or recorder during your discussions. If someone is facilitating or recording and wants to give a personal opinion or suggestion during a meeting, they need to announce that they are stepping out of their role and becoming a participant for the moment.

If you have the resources or connections, you could try to find an outside person(s) to be the facilitator and/or recorder during the discussions. If you do not have an outside person to be the facilitator and recorder, it is a good idea to switch roles for each meeting. Switching responsibilities at each meeting allows everyone an opportunity for input.

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A typical neighborhood action plan has eight basic elements. Each of these steps builds on the previous one. These eight steps will take your organization from determining your boundaries and assessing your neighborhood to developing and prioritizing action steps. These steps provide a process to produce a well-structured plan. It is important to bethrough in each step, but just as important to know when to stop and continue to the next step or element.

### Steps to develop a neighborhood plan

- Step 1: Determine your boundaries
- Step 2: Assess your neighborhood
- Step 3: Identify the issues
- Step 4: Develop goals and objectives
- Step 5: Collect data
- Step 6: Identify neighborhood resources and assets
- Step 7: Develop and prioritize actions
- Step 8: Assemble your action plan



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## Plan Development

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### Step 1: Determine your boundaries

What do you consider to be neighborhood planning areas? Does everyone in your organization agree on the boundaries? What other community partners could you collaborate with – neighborhood businesses, churches, banks, social service agencies in your area.

#### Items Needed

- ✓ large and small maps of your neighborhood and immediate surroundings
- ✓ markers, pens, and/or pencils

#### Directions

- Give each participant a small map and something to write with.
- Ask each participant to draw the boundaries of your neighborhood on a city street map.
- Collect the maps.
- Identify the common boundaries and where differences occur.
- Discuss any differences on the boundaries until there is a consensus on the boundaries.
- Draw the agreed upon planning area boundaries on a large map for all to see.

#### To Consider:

There is no standard size for a neighborhood area plan. If the neighborhood is too small, you will have limited resources to develop your plan and implement it. Your organization's members should share many of the same concerns. If the neighborhood is too big and there appears to be a substantial difference in concerns between different parts of the neighborhood, you may want to reevaluate your boundaries. Remember, a neighborhood is not just a residential enclave, but also includes businesses and services for the neighborhood. If you include businesses, service providers, and/or large undeveloped parcels within your neighborhood boundaries, make sure to include the people associated with these uses in your membership as well. Their input is important, especially when recommending actions that affect them. If you are setting your boundaries for the first time, keep in mind natural borders, such as highways, waterways, railroads and changes in land use when establishing them.

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## Plan Development

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### Step 2: Assess your neighborhood

There are many ways to evaluate your neighborhood. Don't just focus on the negative things; but look at the positive as well.

<b>Items Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Large sheets of paper</li><li>✓ Markers</li><li>✓ Tape</li></ul>
<b>Pre-meeting Preparation</b>	Ask participants to walk or drive around your neighborhood before the meeting. You may want to schedule a group walk or drive. If you have block captains, ask them to conduct a survey of their block to list positive and negative characteristics of their block(s).
<b>Directions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask the participants to think about their neighborhood.</li><li>• Explain that you will conduct a <b>SWOT</b> analysis on your neighborhood. A <b>SWOT</b> analysis is simply stating the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Below are some examples:</li></ul>
<b>SWOT stand for:</b>	<p><b>Strengths</b>, positive current conditions, such as good parks, old trees, friendly people</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b>, negative current conditions, such as inadequate schools, graffiti, high weeds</p> <p><b>Opportunities</b>, positive future conditions, such as a proposed recreation center in the area, active Citizens On Patrol group</p> <p><b>Threats</b>, negative future conditions, such as expansion of major road, closing a health center</p> <p>Note: Some items may be listed under more than one category. For example, a vacant lot may be viewed as a weakness due to illegal dumping that occurs on it. On the other hand, the same vacant lot can be viewed as an opportunity in that it could be turned into a neighborhood garden or a location for new housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Place four large sheets of paper on a wall in front of the group —label one for each category. Add more sheets as needed.</li><li>• Ask the group to name the strengths of your neighborhood. Write them on the sheet labeled STRENGTHS.</li><li>• Ask the group to name the weaknesses of your neighborhood. Write them on the sheet labeled WEAKNESSES.</li><li>• Ask the group to name the opportunities facing your neighborhood. Write them on the sheet labeled OPPORTUNITIES.</li><li>• Ask the group to name the threats facing your neighborhood. Write them on the sheet labeled THREATS.</li><li>• Make sure you allow enough time to talk about all four categories. You may have to limit the time devoted to the discussion on one of the topics to get to them all.</li><li>• Continue the discussion until there are no more items to list or until the allotted time has expired.</li></ul>

Plan Development

Step 2: Assess your neighborhood

To Consider

Touring the neighborhood as a group allows you to hear each other’s perspectives on the neighborhood and ask questions of each other. There are things that you will see that you didn’t know were there or may have forgotten.

Examples of SWOT Ideas	Strengths	Weakness	Opportunities	Threats
	Mature Tress  Stable population	No local park  Cut-through traffic  Trash in neighborhood	New library schduled	Increased gang activity  Vacant grocery store

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## Plan Development

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### Step 3: Identify Issues

Issues are problem statements or challenges for the neighborhood. They are the weaknesses and threats keeping your organization from reaching its vision and goals.

#### Items Needed

- ✓ Large sheets of paper
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Dots (Optional)
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ **SWOT (Strength, weakness, opportunities and threats)** analysis recordings from previous discussions

#### Directions

- Put the **SWOT** analysis sheets back up, so people can refer to them when brainstorming on the issues. (Optional Step)
- Ask participants to think about the items covered in the **SWOT** analysis, particularly the weaknesses and threats.
- Using this list to work from, identify issues related to your neighborhood.
- Write down every issue identified. Place a check or star by issues that are repeated.
- After all issues are listed or the time allotted has expired, discuss the issues so everyone agrees on the wording.
- List the issues as agreed by the group.
- Prioritize the issues through a ranking exercise. Give each person a marker or a select number of dots, usually three or four. Ask each person to place a mark or a dot beside the issues they feel are most important to the neighborhood.
- Total the marks or dots by each issue and write the number beside each issue.
- Determine how many issues you will tackle. This can be determined by the number of participants in your group, different levels of prioritization, the length of the plan, etc. Indicate the chosen issue by placing a star next to them or circling them.
- Ask someone to rearrange the issues by priority for the next meeting. This can be done on large sheets of paper or on 8 1/2" by 11" sheets to be copied and handed out.

Step 3: Identify Issues

To Consider

Prioritizing issues will determine which ones are most important to the neighborhood and therefore which to tackle first. The most important issues can be researched first and the lower prioritized ones can be researched later if you have time. When determining which issues to pursue, consider a few that will lead to “quick successes.” An early success can provide motivation to the organization and shows others that you take your plan seriously.

- Example of Issues

- Litter in the neighborhood
  - Traffic speeding through the area
  - Alley ways not maintained or clean
  - Safety in neighborhood park

### Step 4: Develop Goals and Objectives

**To Consider** Goals are usually developed from the issues that have been previously identified by the neighborhood. Objectives are tactical in that they spell out specific activities that must be accomplished to reach the goals. So the objectives for each individual goal will enable the goals to be accomplished. Begin by brainstorming with your neighbors and then clarifying your goals and the specific objectives needed for a successful outcome. Some questions that can be asked are:

**Example of Issues**

- Do the goals address each of the identified issues?
- Are there any recurring themes among the goals listed?
- Are we headed in the right direction?
- Is anything missing?

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## Plan Development

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### Step 5: Collect data

Collecting data on the issues will help the neighborhood to understand them better. You will need to find out as much as possible about what is going on related to your issues. What existing programs address these issues? What, if anything has been done in the past? Is anything planned for the future?

Some of this information will be available from the City of Arlington in the form of previous studies, records, maps and ordinances. Other information will need to be collected directly from the neighbors themselves via a neighborhood survey. This will be administered door to door in your neighborhood by citizen volunteers who live there. This survey will be one of the most important sources of information that is used in the action plan development process.

<b>Items Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ List of issues, goals and objectives from the previous step</li><li>✓ Preliminary list of contacts and possible resources for information gathering</li></ul>
<b>Directions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Ask for volunteers to research the top priority issues. Try to get as many people as possible to help do the research. Spreading out the research assignments will greatly facilitate the completion of this step.</li><li>· Note who will research which issue(s) and set a date to have all research completed.</li><li>· Collect only what is necessary.</li><li>· Write up your findings in very simple and concise language.</li><li>· Share your findings with the group.</li><li>· Do more research, if necessary. (Repeat above steps.)</li></ul>
<b>To Consider</b>	<p>Research helps separate fact from perception. For example, the neighborhood may think crime is a problem but crime statistics show incidences of crime are actually very low in the neighborhood. Then you'll need to discover what is driving that perception. The neighborhood survey mentioned above will provide valuable first hand information.</p> <p>You may want to have small teams work on researching each issue so one or two people don't get bogged down with all of the research. The teams can look at the information and compile it for the entire group. You may need to get some information through field work instead of from an agency. For instance if weeded lots are a problem in your neighborhood, you may want to drive through the neighborhood to identify the location of the lots.</p>

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## Plan Development

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### Step 6: Identify neighborhood resources and assets

Many organizations throughout the city and community can provide you with information. Consider the resources of your neighbors and the business people in your neighborhood. They can be a wealth of information and serve as a resource for implementing your plan. A neighbor may have lived in the neighborhood for a number of years and can provide the history on a project or an issue. Resources include, but are not limited to, government, businesses, schools, local residents, religious institutions, and social service providers.

Neighborhood assets can be human, physical, and fiscal. Human assets are volunteer talents and skills of people in your neighborhood area. Physical assets can be a local park, or beautiful trees, sidewalks or a nearby commercial area. Fiscal assets may be monetary resources of your neighborhood association or future dedicated funds for street or sewer rebuild projects.

From within your neighborhood area and among your neighborhood team, you will find members who can contribute writing skills, financial wisdom, organizational skills, graphic arts skills, legal expertise, and volunteer labor. Perhaps someone can provide technical writing skills for a newsletter; or someone has a unique skill in working with youth that would be good for involving youth in a park cleanup instead of graffiti tagging. By drawing on those resources from within your neighborhood first, and then building on external resources, you will ensure that your neighborhood action plan will become a reality.

Listed below are some of the kinds of information you may be able to get from public and private organizations. This is not an exhaustive list but meant as a starting point. Be creative and don't be afraid to ask.

<b>Items Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Large sheets of paper</li><li>✓ Markers</li><li>✓ Tape</li></ul>
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**Directions** Using large sheets of paper, so that everyone can see, begin to list possible resources for each issue.

<b>Possible Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Neighbors and businesses</i> — history of the neighborhood, background on a previous project or issue</li><li>• <i>City of Arlington</i> — Census information, zoning and land use, scheduled projects, current programs, maps</li><li>• <i>Tarrant County</i> — scheduled projects, current programs</li><li>• <i>State of Texas</i> — information on health, environmental issues and employment, roadway improvements</li><li>• <i>School district(s)</i> — enrollment figures, programs, scheduled projects</li><li>• <i>Nonprofit organizations</i> — information on current social programs and services</li><li>• <i>UTA, TCC</i> — statistics, possible help with projects</li><li>• <i>Businesses</i> — resources to implement projects</li><li>• <i>Foundations</i> — possible source for funding future projects</li></ul>
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## Plan Development

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### Step 7: Develop and prioritize actions

Actions are specific steps to be taken to achieve each of your goals. Actions should be precise, attainable, and assignable. As an organization, you need to decide where you want to invest the most resources. Look at which actions best meet your strategies and are within your capability.

#### Items Needed

- ✓ Large sheets of paper
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Prioritized list of issues, either on large sheets of paper displayed so everyone can see or listed on handouts.

#### Pre-discussion preparations

A helpful way to develop actions is to use the following criteria to make sure you develop SMART actions:

**S**PECIFIC  
**M**EASURABLE  
**A**TTAINABLE  
**R**ELEVANT  
**T**IME-BOUND

#### Directions

- Display the prioritized issues on large sheets so everyone can see or hand out individual copies of them.
- Display additional large sheets and begin to develop specific actions for addressing the top issues.
- Using consensus or voting, determine which actions you want to tackle first.

#### To Consider

As you develop actions, use your imagination and don't rule anything out at this stage.

In developing your actions, your organization can 1) stay as one large group and develop actions for issues with the entire group or 2) divide into committees to develop the actions for the issues assigned to each committee. If you choose to use committees, be sure to bring your proposals for actions to the large group for discussion and approval.

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## Plan Development

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### Step 7: Develop and prioritize actions

Use the information obtained during the data collection step to help develop actions. Keep a copy of your resources list to help determine who can help with a particular problem. Your actions should be specific and should look at cost and time requirements. You don't have to know the exact figures, but you should have an estimate. Identify what resources you need to accomplish the action. Do you need to go outside of your neighborhood for someone with expertise or do you have someone in the neighborhood who can do it? If it costs money, do you have the funds? If not, how can you raise it?

Discuss the pros and cons of each action. Look at which ones can be finished easily and quickly. You may want to have a few long-term actions that will take more time and energy to accomplish.

#### **Example of Actions**

There is no magic number of actions to select. Keep in mind the number of volunteers in your organization, how much money you have or can raise, and the time period of your plan. Each of these will help determine how many actions your group can reasonably take on. As with the issues, prioritize your actions. You may want to vote on which actions to tackle first. Voting will enable you to see which action the majority of your organization favors.

- Participate in citywide clean up twice a year.
- Develop a neighborhood survey to identify streets and sidewalks in desrepair in 2001.
- Form a committee to discuss speeding problems with the Traffic Department within six months.

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## Plan Development

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### Step 8: Assemble your action plan

All of your work, goals, issues, actions and action plans – should be presented in a form that is easy to follow and easy to reproduce. Your organization needs to determine if you will produce your neighborhood plan within your membership or have an outside company produce it. A local business may help with production and duplication if they are acknowledged in the plan.

**Items Needed**

- ✓ Prioritized issues
- ✓ Goals and objections
- ✓ Prioritized listing of actions with who is responsible and a timeline

- Select a small group to prepare the draft plan.
- Allow your organization a chance to review the draft plan.
- Have your plan duplicated
- Distribute your plan to organization members, city officials and anyone else you choose

**Example** Issue: Litter in the neighborhood

Priority	Goal	Responsibility	Resource	Timeline
1	Participate in citywide cleanup twice a year	Sarah Jones	City - Health, CMO Business Arlington Disposal	October April
2	Commit to pick up litter during daily outings in the neighborhood.	Robert Allen	Neighborhood Organization Students	Ongoing
3	Organize a neighborhood clean up twice a year.	Not Scheduled	City Health	September May
4	Pass out educational flyers to everyone in the neighborhood.	Not Scheduled	Neighborhood Organization Keep Texas Beautiful	Annually

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**Plan For Action** A neighborhood action plan is a **plan for action** — not just a plan to sit on the shelf. The successful implementation of your plan is dependent upon a high level of participation on the part of all the residents and businesses in the neighborhood area. Many of the actions are carried out by neighborhood volunteers and are not possible without strong support from the community. Consider involving all the members of your neighborhood team that were involved and other citizens who support your plan and want to become involved. Utilize all your team members — residents, business owners, property owners, tenants, community institutions, schools, faith-based organizations, and non-profit organizations.

Use your neighborhood's assets — human, physical, and fiscal — that you identified in your plan. Build on these assets — neighborhood volunteers, a local park, monetary resources of your neighborhood association or future dedicated funds for street or sewer rebuild project. These provide important leverage for future success. By drawing on those resources from within your neighborhood first, before seeking outside assistance from City Hall or other institutions, you will ensure that your neighborhood action plan will become a reality.

**Publicize** Publicize your successes. Write a brief article on a recent project and what you accomplished and send it to the newspaper. If you have a neighborhood newsletter, make sure you print an article about the project before and after. Even if you don't have a newsletter, make sure city officials know what you are doing and what your organization has accomplished. Organize parties, recognition ceremonies and the like to celebrate your successes.

**Monitor** How will the plan be monitored? Will one person monitor the entire plan or will different people monitor different parts of the plan? Someone needs to ensure that actions are undertaken according to the timeline.

**Evaluate** Consider having a brief update on the plan and its actions at each of your organization's meetings. Tell the members what is going on, what is planned, solicit volunteers, etc.

Is there a need to develop new actions? Is there a need to delete or postponed solutions? Have the improvements that are completed accomplished what you wanted? Are the actions successfully addressing your issues?

Based on this evaluation, you may need to revise the action plan. Change is an ongoing occurrence and may affect the plan. As solutions are finished, remember to indicate such on the plan. You will then need to select new actions to undertake.

**Update** After each project, stop to see how well you did. Did you stay on schedule? Did you finish all you had set out to do? Was the effort of the project worth it? Would you do the project again?

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## Appendix A: Neighborhood Network

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### *Join the Neighborhood Network !*

The City of Arlington invites your neighborhood group to become part of the **Neighborhood Network** a directory of neighborhood associations, homeowners associations, crime watch and citizens on patrol groups.

The citizens and neighborhoods of Arlington are our most important resources. Strong viable neighborhoods create a sense of pride by working to keep our neighborhoods vibrant places to live, work and play. For the City of Arlington, the key to our success as the city of choice will be communication and coordination among citizens, neighborhood organizations and city government.

The purpose of the Neighborhood Network is to provide open communication between the City and its neighborhoods. Upon joining the Network your organization will receive future information on city events, construction projects, public hearings and capital improvements in your area.

When you join the Network you will receive a welcome packet that includes:

- A map of your association boundaries
- Neighborhood Handbook series: Organization and Planning
- Zoning and Platting brochures and information
- Overview of the Neighborhood Zoning Notification Program which will provide regular information on proposed zoning changes within one mile of our neighborhood boundaries
- City of Arlington Planning Atlas CD
- Information on any neighborhood-related programs
- Eligibility to apply for neighborhood identification street topper program
- Information on your free neighborhood association website through Neighborhood Link, a nationally recognized community network of associations

Please complete the registration form and return by mail to City Manager's Office, P.O. Box 90231, MS 01-0300, Arlington, Texas 76004-3231. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call R.J. Blair, Neighborhood Coordinator, at 817-459-6104 or email at [blairr@ci.arlington.tx.us](mailto:blairr@ci.arlington.tx.us).

## Appendix A: Neighborhood Registration Form



### The Neighborhood Network NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION REGISTRATION FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Neighborhood Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address of Organization:

Street/P.O. Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email or Web Site address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Contact Person:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Association Office Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Secondary Contact Person:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Association Office Held: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Neighborhood Information

- Neighborhood Association Boundaries: (specify exact streets and geographic boundaries)  
North \_\_\_\_\_ South \_\_\_\_\_  
East \_\_\_\_\_ West \_\_\_\_\_
- When was your neighborhood/homeowners association started ? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who is eligible to be a member of your neighborhood or homeowners association?  
(For ex: residents, businesses, organizations, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- How many homes are located in your association's boundaries ? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many people belong to your association? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does your association have adopted bylaws? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no; please include with your application.
- Please attach a list of any subcommittees that have been formed and what their areas of interest are.
- How often does your association meet and when? \_\_\_\_\_  
Where does it meet? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does your association charge its members dues? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no  
How much: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Circle how often dues are collected: Annually Bi-annually Monthly

**Please mail this application along with any attachments to:**

City Manager's Office, P. O. Box 90231, MS 01-0300, Arlington, TX 76004-3231

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## Appendix B: Consensus Building

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According to the American Heritage Dictionary, *consensus* is defined as “an opinion or position reached by a group as a whole or by majority will.” Consensus building is a decision making process that takes more time than traditional voting. Consensus building requires talking about issues and solutions and modifying them until everyone is in agreement. More often than not, the original idea is changed in order to reach consensus.

Consensus building is used when a group tries to reach a decision that is best for the entire group rather than for an individual. It is a solution that all feel they can support even though it may not have been their idea. Consensus building involves educating each other on alternative solutions. It seeks to broaden participant’s views and stimulate creative thinking.

The main benefit of consensus building is to reach a decision to which everyone is committed. It is for this reason that it is worthwhile to make consensus building the primary method of group decision making.

Consensus building involves

- defining the problem;
- analyzing the problem;
- suggesting solutions to solve the problem;
- comparing alternatives and selecting the best solution; and
- implementing the best solution.